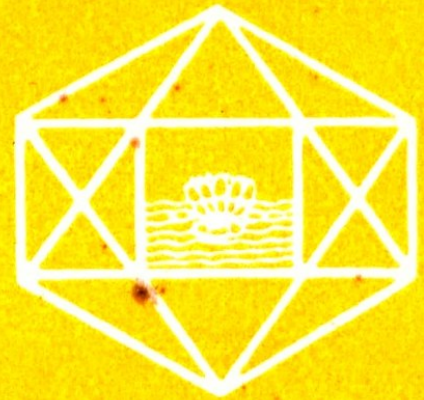


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— Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.

Sri Aurobindo

The transition from mind to Super-mind is a passage from Nature into Super-nature. Four steps of ascent lead the human intelligence to the Super-mind; these are: Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuitive Mind and Over-mind.

The First Decisive Step Out of our Human Intelligence

Our first decisive step out of our human intelligence, our normal mentality, is an ascent into a higher Mind, a mind no longer of mingled light and obscurity or half-light, but a large clarity of the Spirit. Its basic substance is a unitarian sense of being with a powerful multiple dynamisation capable of the formation of a multitude of aspects of knowledge, ways of action, forms and significances of becoming, of all of which there is a spontaneous inherent knowledge.... It is a luminous thought-mind, a mind of Spirit-born conceptual knowledge. An all-awareness emerging from the original identity, carrying the truths the identity held in itself, conceiving

swiftly, victoriously, multitudinously, formulating and by self-power of the Idea effectually realising its conceptions, is the character of this greater mind of knowledge....

Here in this greater Thought there is no need of a seeking and self-critical ratiocination, no logical motion step by step towards a conclusion, no mechanism of express or implied deductions and inferences, no building or deliberate concatenation of idea with idea in order to arrive at an ordered sum or outcome of knowledge; for this limping action of our reason is a movement of Ignorance searching for knowledge, obliged to safeguard its steps against error, to erect a selective mental structure for its temporary shelter and to base it on foundations already laid and carefully laid but never firm, because it is not supported on a soil of native awareness but imposed on an original soil of nescience. There is not here, either, that other way of our mind at its keenest and swiftest, a rapid hazardous divination and insight, a play of the searchlight of intelligence probing into the little known or the unknown. This higher consciousness is a Knowledge formulating itself on a basis of self-existent all-awareness and manifesting some part of its integrality, a harmony of its significances put into thought-form.

It can freely express itself in single ideas, but its most characteristic movement is a mass ideation, a system or totality of truth-seeing at a single view; the relations of idea with idea, of truth with truth are not established by logic but pre-exist and emerge already self-seen in the integral whole. There is an initiation into forms of an ever-present but till now inactive knowledge, not a system of conclusions from premises or data; this thought is a self-revelation of eternal Wisdom, not an acquired knowledge. Large aspects of truth come into view in which the ascending Mind, if it chooses, can dwell with satisfaction and, after its former manner, live in them as in a structure; but if progress is to be made, these structures can constantly expand into a larger structure or several of them combine themselves into a provisional greater whole on the way to a yet unachieved integrality. In the end there is a great totality of truth known and experienced but still a totality capable of infinite enlargement because there is no end to the aspects of knowledge, *nāstyanto vistarasya me*.

This is the Higher Mind in its aspect of cognition; but there is also the aspect of will, of dynamic effectuation of the Truth: here we find that this greater more brilliant Mind works always on the rest of the being, the mental will, the heart and its feel-

ings, the life, the body, through the power of thought, through the idea-force. It seeks to purify through knowledge, to deliver through knowledge, to create by the innate power of knowledge. The idea is put into the heart or the life as a force to be accepted and worked out; the heart and life become conscious of the idea and respond to its dynamisms and their substance begins to modify itself in that sense, so that the feelings and actions become the vibrations of this higher wisdom, are informed with it, filled with the emotion and the sense of it: the will and the life impulses are similarly charged with its power and its urge of self-effectuation; even in the body the idea works so that, for example, the potent thought and will of health replaces its faith in illness and its consent to illness, or the idea of strength calls in the substance, power, motion, vibration of strength; the idea generates the force and form proper to the idea and imposes it on our substance of Mind, Life or Matter. It is in this way that the first working proceeds; it charges the whole being with a new and superior consciousness, lays a foundation of change, prepares it for a superior truth of existence.

Sri Aurobindo

(The Life Divine, II, Chap. 26)

Q: You have asked the professors "to think with ideas instead of with words". You have also said that later on you will ask them to think with experiences. Will you throw some light on these three ways of thinking?

On Thinking

Our house has a very high tower; right on the top of that tower there is a bright and bare room, the last one before we emerge into the open air in full light.

Sometimes when we have leisure, we climb up to this bright room and there, if we remain very quiet, one or more fair visitors call on us; a few of them are tall, a few others small, some single, some in groups; all are bright and graceful.

Generally, in our joy at their arrival and in our haste to welcome them with warmth, we lose our tranquillity and come down at a gallop to rush into the large hall at the base of the tower, which is the store-room of words. Here, somewhat excited, we se-

lect, reject, assemble, combine, disarrange, rearrange all the words at our disposal in an attempt to produce a replica of such and such a visitor who has come to us. But most often the picture we succeed in making is more like a caricature than a portrait.

If, however, we were wiser we would remain up there at the summit of the tower, quite still, in a joyous contemplation. Then we would see that after a certain length of time the visitors themselves descend slowly, gracefully, calmly, without losing in the least their elegance of their beauty and, while crossing the store-room of words, they smoothly and automatically clothe themselves with the necessary words in order to be perceptible even in the material house.

This is what I call thinking with ideas.

When this procedure will no more be a mystery to you, I shall explain what is meant by thinking with experience.

May, 1960

The Mother

Prevention of Thoughts

Q: How can one become free from mental constructions ?

A: By getting a quiet mind.

Q: From where do thoughts come and how do they act ?

A: They come like everything else from Nature and take form in the mind.

Q: How to prevent thoughts from entering into the mind — thoughts that come from Nature and take form in the mind ?

A: You can prevent them only in one of the two ways:-

- 1) Calling down an absolute peace and stillness into the mind.
- 2) Becoming aware of the thoughts at a distance before they enter the personal mind.

Until then what you have to do is to reject them.

Q: What is meant by drawing back from mind, life and body ?

A: Not identifying yourself with their movements — looking at them as you would look at anything outside you.

1933

Sri Aurobindo

On Education

The true secret, whether
with child or man, is to
find his deeper self.

The Work of Parents & Teachers

Formerly, education was merely a mechanical forcing of the child's nature into arbitrary grooves of training and knowledge in which his individual subjectivity was the last thing considered, and his family upbringing was a constant repression and compulsory shaping of his habits, his thoughts, his character into the mould fixed for them by the conventional ideas or individual interests and ideals of the teachers and parents. The discovery that education must be a bringing out of the child's own intellectual and moral capacities to their highest possible value and must be based on the psychology of the child-nature was a step forward towards a more healthy because a more subjective system; but it still fell short because it still regarded him as an object to be handled and moulded by the teacher, to be educated. But at least there was a glimmering of the realisation that each human being is a self-developing soul and that the business of both parent and

teacher is to enable and to help the child to educate himself, to develop his own intellectual, moral, aesthetic and practical capacities and to grow freely as an organic being, not to be kneaded and pressured into form like an inert plastic material. It is not yet realised what this soul is or that the true secret, whether with child or man, is to help him to find his deeper self, the real psychic entity within. That, if we ever give it a chance to come forward, and still more if we call it into the foreground as "the leader of the march set in our front," will itself take up most of the business of education out of our hands and develop the capacity of the psychological being towards a realisation of its potentialities of which our present mechanical view of life and man and external routine methods of dealing with them prevent us from having any experience or forming any conception. These new educational methods are on the straight way to this truer dealing. The closer touch attempted with the psychical entity behind the vital and physical mentality and an increasing reliance on its possibilities must lead to the ultimate discovery that man is inwardly a soul and a conscious power of the Divine and that the evocation of this real man within is the right object of education and indeed of all human life if it would find and live according to the hidden Truth and deepest law of its own being.

(The Human Cycle, pp. 27-28)

Sri Aurobindo

On Sleep

Even for those who have never been in trance, it is good to repeat a mantra, a word, a prayer before going into sleep. But there must be a life in the words, I do not mean an intellectual signification, nothing of that kind, but a vibration. And on the body its effect is extraordinary: it begins to vibrate, vibrate, vibrate... and quietly you let yourself go as though you wanted to get into sleep. The body vibrates more and more and still more and away you go. That is the cure for *tamas*.

It is *tamas* which causes bad sleep. There are two kinds of bad sleep: the sleep that makes you heavy, dull, as though you lose all the effect of the effort you put in during the preceding day; and the sleep that exhausts you as if you were passing your time in fight. I have noticed that if you cut your sleep into slices (it is simply a habit to form) the nights become better. That is to say, you must be able to come back to your normal consciousness and aspiration at fixed intervals — come back to the call of the consciousness.... But for that you must not make use of an alarm bell. When you are in trance, it is not good to be shaken out of it.

When you are about to go into sleep, you can make a formation and say: "I shall wake up at such an hour" (you do that very well when you are a child). For the first stretch of sleep you must count at least three hours; for the last one hour is sufficient. But the first one must be three hours at the minimum. On the whole, you have to remain in bed at least seven hours; in six hours you have not time enough to do much (naturally I am looking from the point of view of sadhana, to make the nights useful).

To make use of the nights is an excellent thing, it has a double effect: a negative effect, it prevents you from falling backward, losing whatever you have gained — that, indeed, is painful — and a positive effect, you make some progress, you continue your progress. You make use of the night, then there is no trace of fatigue any more.

Two things you must eliminate: falling into the torpor of the inconscience, with all these things of the subconscious and of the inconscient that rise up, invade you, enter into you; and a vital and mental superactivity where you pass your time in fighting, literally — terrible battles. People come out of that state bruised, as if they had received blows — and they did receive them, then it is not "as if"! And I see only one way, change the nature of sleep.

Life has a Purpose

THIS is thy work and the aim of thy being and that for which thou art here, to become the divine superman and a perfect vessel of the Godhead. All else that thou hast to do, is only a making thyself ready or a joy by the way or a fall from the purpose. But the goal is this and the purpose is this and not in the power of the way or the joy by the way but in the joy of the goal is the greatness and the delight of thy being. The joy of the way is because that which is drawing thee is also with thee on thy path and the power to climb was given thee that thou mightest mount to thy own summits.

If thou hast a duty, this is thy duty; if thou askest what shall be thy aim, let this be thy aim; if thou demandest pleasure, there is no greater joy, for all other joy is broken or limited, the joy of a dream or the joy of a sleep or the joy of the self-forgetting. But this is the joy of thy whole being. For if thou sayest what is thy being, this is thy being, the Divine, and all else is only its broken or its perverse appearance. If thou seekest the Truth, this is the Truth. Place it before thee and in all things be faithful to it.

Sri Aurobindo

(The Hour of God, p. 7)

Selections from the Mother

It is the Divine Presence that gives values to life. This Presence is the source of all peace, all joy, all security. Find this Presence in yourself and all your difficulties will disappear.

*

Have no ambition, above all, pretend nothing, but be at each instant the utmost that you can be.

*

Before doing anything, beginning anything, trying anything be sure first of all that you are not only as sincere as you can be, but you intend to become still more sincere.

...And Thou Art There

In Peace and Silence the Eternal manifests; allow nothing to disturb you and the Eternal will manifest; have perfect equality in face of all and the Eternal will be there.... Yes, we should not put too much intensity, too much effort into our seeking for Thee; the effort and intensity become a veil in front of Thee; we must not desire to see Thee, for that is still a mental agitation which obscures Thy Eternal Presence; it is in the most complete Peace, Serenity and Equality that all is Thou even as Thou art all, and the least vibration in this perfectly pure and calm atmosphere is an obstacle to Thy manifestation. No haste, no inquietude, no tension, Thou, nothing but Thou, without any analysis or any objectivising, and Thou art there without a possible doubt, for all becomes a Holy Peace and a Sacred Silence.

And that is better than all the meditations in the world.

The Mother

(Cent. Ed. Vol 25, p. 416)



A Day shall come when all the wealth of this world, freed at last from the enslavement to the anti-Divine forces, offers itself spontaneously and fully to the service of the Divine's Work upon earth.

6.1.55

1955

No human will can finally prevail against the Divine's Will. Let us put ourselves deliberately and exclusively on the side of the Divine, and the Victory is ultimately certain

If war is prevented simply by international pressure, the state of covert war will still continue; — it may even take new and disastrous forms. The following passage from Sri Aurobindo, which appeared in the *Arya* in 1917, could well apply to the present world affairs.

The Weapon of Commercial Pressure

Commercialism is a modern sociological phenomenon; one might almost say, that is the whole phenomenon of modern society....

This great change has affected profoundly the character of international relations in the past and is likely to affect them still more openly and powerfully in the future....

Deprived of other weapons the nations are bound to have increasing resort to the weapon of commercial pressure, as did Capital and Labour in their chronic state of "pacific" struggle within the limits

of the national life. The instruments would be different, but would follow the same principle, that of the strike and the lockout which are on one side a combined passive resistance by the weaker party to enforce its claims, on the other a passive pressure by the stronger party to enforce its wishes. Between nations, the corresponding weapon to the strike would be a commercial boycott, already used more than once in an unorganised fashion both in Asia and Europe and bound to be extremely effective and telling if organised even by a politically or commercially weak nation. For the weaker nation is necessary to the stronger, if as nothing else, yet as a market or as a commercial and industrial victim. The corresponding weapons to the lockout would be the refusal of capital or machinery, the prohibition of all or of any needed imports into the offending or victim country, or even a naval blockade leading, if long maintained, to industrial ruin or to national starvation. The blockade is a weapon used originally only in a state of war, but it was employed against Greece as a substitute for war, and this use may easily be extended in the future. There is always too the weapon of prohibitive tariffs.

It is clear that these weapons need not be employed for commercial purposes or motives only, they may be grasped at to defend or to attack any national interest, to enforce any claim of justice or injustice between nation and nation....

So long as there is not a firm international authority, the use of this weapon would not be likely to be limited to such occasions or used only for just and legitimate ends. It might be used by a strong nation, secure of general indifference, to crush and violate the weak; it might be used by a combination of strong imperial Powers to enforce their selfish and evil will upon the world. Force and coercion of any kind not concentrated in the hands of a just and impartial authority are always liable to abuse and misapplication. Therefore inevitably in the growing unity of mankind the evolution of such an authority must become an early and pressing need. The World-State even in its early and imperfect organisation must begin not only to concentrate military force in its hands, but to commence consciously in the beginning what the national State only arrived at by a slow and natural development, the ordering of the commercial, industrial, economic life of the race and the control at first, no doubt, only of the principal relations of international commerce, but inevitably in the end of its whole system and principles. Since industry and trade are now five-sixths of social life and the economic principle the governing principle of society, a World-State which did not control human life in its chief principle and its largest activity would exist only in name.

Sri Aurobindo

(The Ideal of Human Unity, XXV)



SRI AUROBINDO: THE AGE OF SRI AUROBINDO

Someone has written to this effect: "This is not the age of Sri Aurobindo. His ideal of a divine life upon earth may or may not be true; at any rate it is not of today or even of tomorrow. Humanity will take some time before it reaches that stage or its possibility. What we are concerned with here and now is something perhaps less great, less spiritual, but more urgent and more practical. The problem is not to run away with one's soul, but to maintain its earthly tenement, to keep body and soul together: one has to live first, live materially before one can hope to live spiritually."

Well, the view expressed in these words is not a new revelation. It has been the cry of suffering humanity through the ages. Man has borne his cross since the beginning of his creation through want and privation, through disease and bereavement, through all manner of turmoil and tribulation, and yet — *mirabile dictu* — at the same time, in the very midst of those conditions, he has been aspiring and yearning for something else, ignoring the present, looking into the beyond. It is not the prosperous and the more happily placed in life who find it more easy to turn to the higher life, it is not the wealthiest who has the greatest opportunity to pursue a spiritual idea. On the contrary, spiritual leaders have thought and experienced otherwise.

Apart from the well-recognised fact that only in distress does the normal man think of God and non-worldly things, the real matter, however, is that the inner life is a thing

apart and follows its own line of movement, does not depend upon, is not subservient to, the kind of outer life that one may happen to live under. The Bible says indeed, "Blessed are the poor, blessed are they that mourn" But the Upanishad declares, on the other hand, that even as one lies happily on a royal couch, bathes and anoints himself with all the perfumes of the world, has attendants all around and always to serve him, even so, one can be full of the divine consciousness from the crown of the head to the tip of his toe-nail. In fact, a poor or a prosperous life is in no direct or even indirect ratio to a spiritual life. All the miseries and immediate needs of a physical life do not and cannot detain or delay one from following the path of the ideal; nor can all your riches be a burden to your soul and overwhelm it, if it chooses to walk on — it can not only walk, but soar and fly with all that knapsack on its back.

If one were to be busy about reforming the world and when that was done then alone to turn to other-worldly things, in that case, one would never take the turn, for the world will never be reformed totally or even considerably in that way. It is not that reformers have for the first time appeared on the earth in the present age. Men have attempted social, political, economic and moral reforms from times immemorial. But that has not barred the spiritual attempt or minimised its importance. To say that because an ideal is apparently too high or too great for the present age, it must be kept in cold storage is to set a premium on the present nature of humanity and eternise it: that would bind the world to its old moorings and never give it the

opportunity to be free and go out into the high seas of larger and greater realisations.

The ideal or perhaps one should say the policy of Realpolitik is the thing needed in this world. To achieve something actually in the physical and material field, even a lesser something, is worth much more than speculating on high-flaunting chimeras and indulging in day-dreams. Yes, but what is this something that has to be achieved in the material world? It is always an ideal. Even procuring food for each and every person, clothing and housing all is not less an ideal for all its concern about actuality. Only there are ideals and ideals; some are nearer to the earth, some seem to be in the background. But the mystery is that it is not always the ideal nearest to the earth which is the easiest to achieve or the first thing to be done first. Do we not see before our very eyes how some very simply innocent social and economic changes are difficult to carry out — they bring in their train quite disproportionately gestures and movements of violence and revolution? That is because we seek to cure the symptoms and not touch the root of the disease. For even the most innocent-looking social, economic or political abuse has at its base far-reaching attitudes and life-urges — even a spiritual outlook — that have to be sought out and tackled first, if the attempt at reform is to be permanently and wholly successful. Even in mundane matters we do not dig deep enough, or rise high enough.

Indeed, looking from a standpoint that views the working of the forces that act and achieve — and not the external facts and events and arrangements alone — one finds

that things that are achieved on the material plane are first developed and matured and made ready behind the veil and at a given moment burst out and manifest themselves often unexpectedly and suddenly like a chick out of the shell or the young butterfly out of the cocoon. The Gita points to that truth of Nature when it says: "These beings have already been killed by Me." It is not that a long or strenuous physical planning and preparation alone or in the largest measure brings about a physical realisation. The deeper we go within, the farther we are away from the surface, the nearer we come to the roots and sources of things even most superficial. The spiritual view sees and declares that it is the Brahmic consciousness that holds, inspires, builds up Matter, the physical body and form of Brahman.

The highest ideal, the very highest which God and Nature and Man have in view, is not and cannot be kept in cold storage: it is being worked out even here and now, and it has to be worked out here and now. The ideal of the Life Divine embodies a central truth of existence, and however difficult or chimerical it may appear to be to the normal mind, it is the preoccupation of the inner being of man — all other ways or attempts of curing human ills are faint echoes, masks, diversions of this secret urge at the source and heart of things. That ideal is a norm and a force that is ever dynamic and has become doubly so since it has entered the earth atmosphere and the waking human consciousness and is labouring there. It is always safer and wiser to recognise that fact, to help in the realisation of that truth and be profited by it.

Nolini Kanta Gupta